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# THE ORGANIZER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Vol. 4, No. 10

Agriculture Local 2, UFWA

May 15, 1939

SECRETARY WALLACE TO SPEAK  
MAY 29 AT UNION FORUM

Secretary Henry A. Wallace will conduct the sixth and last of the Union-sponsored forums in THE FARMER IS OUR BOSS series on Monday, May 29, at 4:40 p m in the South Building Auditorium.

The Secretary will discuss The Future of Agriculture in relation to the jobs of Department employees. This talk will afford employees an opportunity to see their work in its orientation to the changing policies of the Department, and marks another milestone in the Union's work of widening employee perspective on the job.

Those who attended the May 15 forum heard Personnel Director Hendrickson, UFWA President Baker and Earl Loveridge of the Forest Service discuss personnel practices in the Department. This and the previous forums have aroused favorable comment among employees throughout the Department.

LOCAL 2 ELECTS OFFICERS  
FOR 1939-40 TERM

Annual elections of officers to serve during the coming year were held at the May 8 meeting of Agriculture Local 2 of the United Federal Workers.

Si Rottenberg of the Division of Marketing and Marketing Agreements was re-elected to serve a third year as President of the Union and Geniana Edwards of the Bureau of Plant Industry was elected to the office of Vice-President. Other officers for the coming year will be: Treasurer - Ben Goldberg of Agricultural Economics, Corresponding Secretary - Magdalena Gale of Soil Conservation Service, Recording Secretary - Sophia Podolsky of the Solicitors' Office, Financial Secretary - John Schricker of the Bureau of Plant Industry.

## NEXT MEETING

Monday, May 22, 8 p m  
532 - 17 St. N. W.



## THE ORGANIZER

Local 2 of The United Federal  
Workers of America, CIO

President....Simon Rottenberg  
Vice-Pres.....Geniana Edwards  
Editor.....Edmond Harris

### WHAT MUST BE DONE ABOUT EFFICIENCY RATINGS

When efficiency ratings come out this year, employees may console themselves with the thought that these may be the last under the present system. The Administration, we understand, is already at work on a new program for rating employees.

There has been general agreement among employees for a long time that the present rating system has failed to achieve any of the objectives which it set out to accomplish. It has not provided a sound basis for uniform grading of employees on the basis of their efficiency. It has not served as a means of advancing employees according to merit. It has probably not reduced appreciably the possibilities for favoritism and discrimination in the treatment of employees. It has, however, obscured such favoritism and discrimination behind a smoke screen of pseudo-

scientific objectivity.

The Union has done a great deal to bring to light the facts regarding the workings of the present rating system. It exposed the inequitable treatment of Farm Security employees who were graded on a more severe basis than those in other divisions. It publicized the factual findings of the excellent study made by the Office of Personnel revealing the complete lack of uniformity on the part of supervisors in rating employees. It has pointed to numerous instances where ratings of employees have been ignored by supervisors as a basis for advancing employees.

Any rating system which is adopted in place of the present one should, we believe, incorporate the following basic features if it is to be of value to employees:

- 1 - The number of grades should be no more than three. Probably the two grades, satisfactory and unsatisfactory, would be best.

- 2 - The rating system should really be used as a basis for advancement. Satisfactory services should be rewarded by salary increases as definitely as unsatisfactory services are penalized by reduction in grade or dismissal.

- 3 - Provision for a fair and efficient manner of handling appeals should be made.



## MENACE OF LOAN SHARKS EXPOSED IN CONSUMERS' GUIDE

A recent issue of Consumers' Guide, valuable little publication of Agriculture's Consumers' Counsel Division, describes the operations of "loan sharks" who each year lend American consumers between 150 million and 200 million dollars a year.

The article, "Loan Sharks Take Their Toll," describes the operations of these credit leeches as follows:

"Borrow \$20 from a loan shark till pay day 2 weeks off, and you will usually pay back at least \$22. A \$2 charge on \$20 for 2 weeks is 260 percent a year. The same \$2 charge would probably be levied for a week's advance; in that event, the interest rate would be double - 520 percent a year."

One of the remedies for the loan shark menace, the Guide points out, lies in cooperative credit organizations formed by consumers. Employees of Agriculture know of the advantages to be gained from this type of cooperation through the Agricultural Employees Credit Union. (P.S. The Credit Union Office can be reached on Branch 5579).

## CAST YOUR VOTE ON SUMMER HOURS

Would you like to work from 8 to 3:30 during the summer months? Or from 8:30 to 4:00? Or would you prefer to stay on the 9 to 4:30 schedule?

If a sufficient number of people indicate an interest in the matter, the Union will make a request for "summer" hours.

Many people might like an extra hour for tennis and golf in the afternoons. Others might prefer to remain at work indoors to escape the hour of Washington summer heat. Night owls will protest against getting up an hour earlier to start work at 8 a m.

But whatever your interest is - make it known so that we can propose what is most satisfactory to the majority.

During the summer, I prefer  
to work from:

8 to 3:30 \_\_\_\_\_

8:30 to 4 \_\_\_\_\_

9 to 4:30 \_\_\_\_\_

Send by chain envelope to  
John A. Schricker, Room 3628,  
South Building



NEW PERSONNEL DIRECTOR OF FSA  
MEETS WITH UNION COMMITTEE

Mercer Evans, recently designated Personnel Director of Farm Security Administration, held an informal discussion with a Union committee which acquainted him with the work of the Union in handling employe grievances.

Mr. Evans told the Union representatives that he believed in the practice of handling employe grievances through their organizational representatives. He also explained to the committee that he hopes to be able to have made, in the near future, a survey of practices with respect to promotions and salary increases in FSA. The committee expressed its complete approval of such a survey, stressing the need for data with respect to low paid employes who have had least opportunities for advancement.

MEMBERSHIP BLANK

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Send by chain envelope  
to John A. Schricker, Room 3628  
South Building.

RAMSPECK BILL  
REPORTED OUT OF COMMITTEE

First victory on the legislative front for the United Federal Workers was achieved last week when the House Civil Service Committee reported out H. R. 960, known as the Ramspeck Bill.

This bill as sponsored by the United Federal Workers provided for the extension of Classified Civil Service Status to all Government workers. As reported out by the Committee, however, the bill excludes those Government workers who are employed in WPA. It is also weakened by a provision for the firing of Government workers who do not pass their non-competitive examinations regardless of how well they may be filling their particular jobs.

In spite of these amendments, the bill as reported out represents an achievement for Federal employes and Jacob Baker, President of the United Federal Workers has issued a special call to all locals urging that "the one thing left to do is to write to your Congressmen, commending the bill and urging its early passage."

We urge Department employes to adopt this course of action at once.